THE WOODS™

JAMES TYNION IV • MICHAEL DIALYNAS

VOL. 8

THE FINAL WAR

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JAMES **TYNION IV** • MICHAEL **DIALYNAS**

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BOOM! STUDIOS™

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BOOM! STUDIOS

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CREATED BY
JAMES TYNION IV & MICHAEL DIALYNAS

WRITTEN BY
JAMES TYNION IV

ILLUSTRATED BY
MICHAEL DIALYNAS

LETTERS BY
ED DUKESHIRE

COVER BY
MICHAEL DIALYNAS

DESIGNER
SCOTT NEWMAN

EDITORS
JASMINE AMIRI
ERIC HARBURN

CHAPTER

TWENTY-NINE

VOTE
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MIREZ LOSES SENA
N HISTORIC
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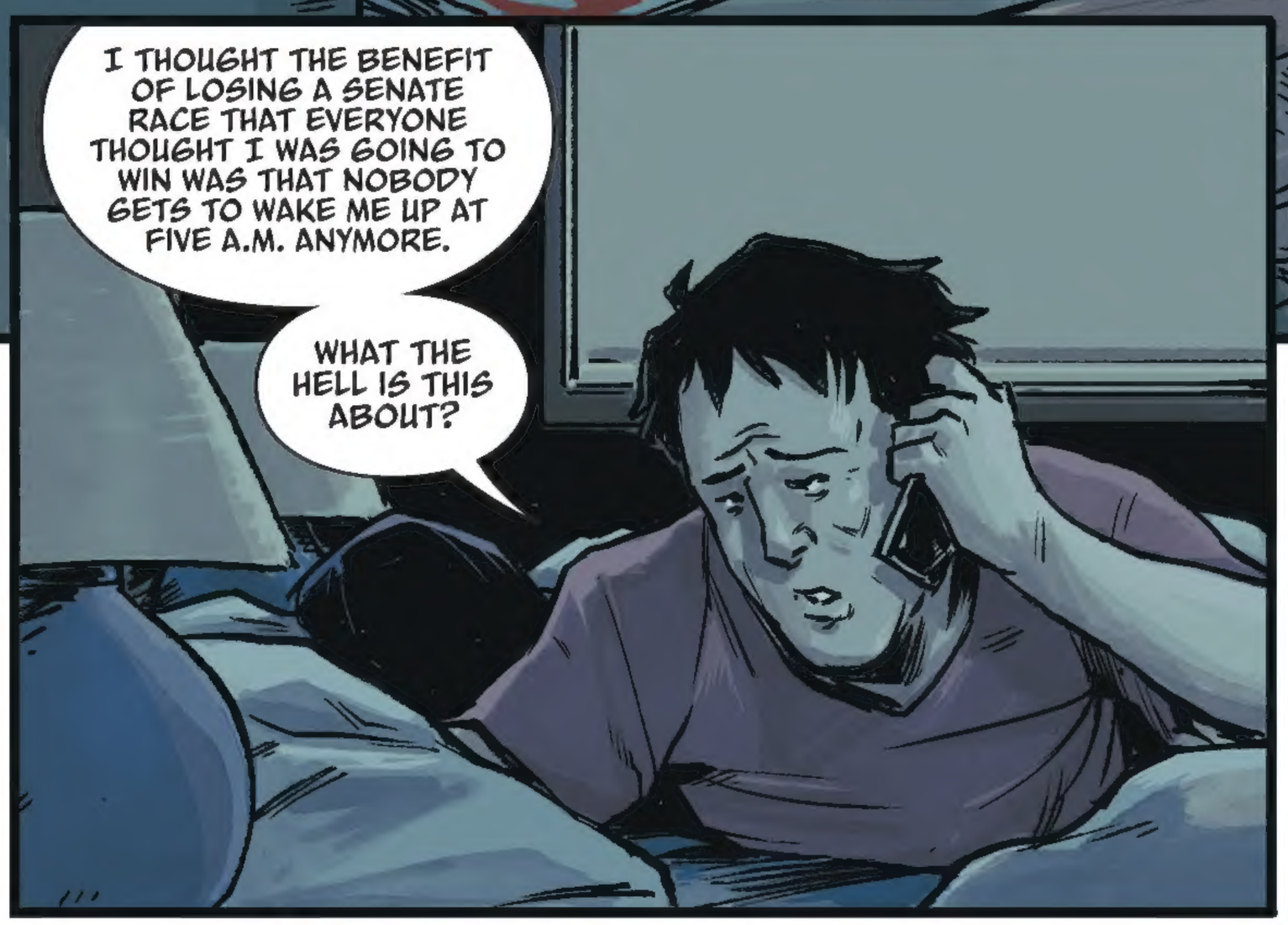

I THOUGHT THE BENEFIT OF LOSING A SENATE RACE THAT EVERYONE THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO WIN WAS THAT NOBODY GETS TO WAKE ME UP AT FIVE A.M. ANYMORE.
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS ABOUT?

WHAT?!

BEAVER DAM, WI.
66 MILES NORTHWEST OF MILWAUKEE.

THAT'S WHAT I KEEP TELLING MYSELF, SENATOR. THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TELLING MYSELF ALL NIGHT.

I WONDER IF I'D FEEL BETTER IF I JUST STARTED SCREAMING.

BUT PART OF ME KNOWS THAT IF I DID, I MIGHT NEVER STOP.

VICKI, YOU'RE FRIGHTENING ME.

SENATOR RAMIREZ.

VICKI, THIS IS SOME KIND OF JOKE, RIGHT? SOME KIND OF PRANK?

YOU ***SHOULD*** BE FRIGHTENED.

YOU THINK YOU'VE ALREADY GRIEVED, BUT THERE'S MORE PAIN IN THERE, I PROMISE. MORE PAIN THAN YOU CAN STAND.

THE TRUTH IS, I DON'T HAVE ANY WAY OF PROCESSING ***ANY*** OF THIS.

AND NEITHER WILL YOU.

...

GOOD. GOOD, YOU'RE HERE.

SENATOR RAMIREZ. WE WANTED TO BRING YOU IN FIRST, BEFORE THE OTHER PARENTS.

VICKI...

SHE'S HAVING A HARD TIME WITH IT. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY, SOON.

JUST...JUST STOP! THIS IS INSANITY.

I *DEMAND* TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE, FOR GOD'S SAKE!

MARCIA JACOBS. YOUR DAUGHTER MARIA WAS IN THE SAME CLASS AS MY DAUGHTER, KAREN.

BEFORE THE SCHOOL DISAPPEARED FROM EARTH, ANYWAYS.

YOU WERE THE ONE ON TELEVISION. THE ONE TALKING ABOUT ALIENS. IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?

I *KNEW* IT. YOU CALLED ME OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FOR ANOTHER DAMN CONSPIRACY THEORY.

NOT QUITE.

WE CALLED YOU BECAUSE, SENATE SEAT OR NOT, YOU'LL KNOW WHO NEEDS TO BE CALLED NEXT.

THAT'S IT. I'M LEAVING.

YOU DROVE AN HOUR NORTH OF MILWAUKEE AT FOUR A.M. BECAUSE SOMEBODY IMPLIED THAT THERE MIGHT BE NEWS ABOUT THE LOCATION OF THE BAY POINT KIDS.

YOU'RE NOT LEAVING.

HER BEDROOM'S JUST UP THE HALL.

NO, I NEED YOU TO LISTEN.

I WANT YOU TO GET ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT FROM THE LAST SPECIAL OUT OF STORAGE AND GET TO MY LAKE HOUSE IN BEAVER DAM AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

I DON'T CARE HOW YOU PAY FOR IT, WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A FORTUNE ON--

MR. SENATOR.

DIEGO IS FINE, HIRAM. I NEED YOU TO TELL ME WHAT IS GOING ON HERE.

EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT THE UNIVERSE IS ABOUT TO CHANGE, DIEGO.

WE PLAY THIS RIGHT, WE'RE GOING TO BE REMEMBERED FOREVER. WE CAN BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE WORLD.

WILL YOU ALL JUST *STOP!* I CAN'T STAND THIS CRYPTIC STUFF ONE MORE SECOND, HIRAM.

I WAS TOLD YOU HAD SOME KIND OF LEAD ON THE BAY POINT KIDS, BUT YOU'RE ALL TALKING INSANE.

I NEED A STRAIGHT ANSWER AND I NEED IT *NOW!*

YES, YES, OF COURSE.

BUT AS A SHOWMAN, I KNOW A SECRET OR TWO ABOUT DELIVERING THE TRUTH.

WE NEED TO SEE IT, TO BELIEVE IT.

HEY, MR. RAMIREZ.

LONG TIME NO SEE.

S-SANAMI. HOW...HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE...?

MREH

AHHH! MREH

AAAH

MREH!

GET OFF OF HIM.

AWW, DID THE BAD MAN SCARE YOU?

MREH

HERE, HAVE PLAYTIME WITH MR. MARMALADE.

TURNS OUT HE LIKES CHOCOLATE BARS, TEDDY BEARS, AND CLOSETS. GO FIGURE.

WHAT WAS *THAT?!*

THAT'S DOCTOR ROBOT. HE'S A SPACE MONKEY.

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

I'D PROBABLY SIT DOWN IF I WERE YOU.

I'LL EXPLAIN IT THE BEST I CAN.

NO!

NO...

YOU'RE LYING. YOU HAVE TO BE LYING. THAT WORLD...THAT WORLD CAN'T BE REAL. IT CAN'T BE.

TELL THAT TO THE ALIEN MONSTER SITTING ON MY SHOULDER.

MREH

I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS.

I NEED YOU TO, SIR. I'M SORRY.

NO... NO NO NO...

LISTEN.

OVER THE LAST YEAR, WE'VE BEEN AT WAR. THE MEN WHO ENGINEERED THE DEATHS OF MARIA, AND CALDER AND SO MANY MORE. *THE HORDE.*

WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING EACH OTHER, BECAUSE WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE TRUE ENEMY SITTING UNDER OUR FEET.

THE POWER OF THAT WORLD, IT'S SOMETHING UNLIKE ANYTHING WE'VE EVER SEEN HERE ON EARTH. I'VE SEEN IT RIP A HUMAN APART FROM THE INSIDE, DRIVING HIM INSANE.

AND THE *LAST* THING I SAW WAS THAT POWER EMBEDDING ITSELF INTO AN EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED TEENAGER.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I GOT BACK HERE, MR. RAMIREZ. I REALLY DON'T.

BUT I THINK IT WAS TO WARN THE WORLD ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IF THAT POWER COMES TO EARTH.

BECAUSE IT WILL RIP *US ALL* APART.

WE NEED TO TELL *EVERYONE* WHAT'S COMING. WE NEED TO GET READY.

LOOK, WE NEED YOUR CONTACTS. WE NEED TO GET THIS INFORMATION WHERE IT NEEDS TO GO.

THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S COMING. *YOU* NEED TO TELL THEM.

BP BP BP

HEY. IT'S ME.

ALL OF THEM.

IT'S *ALL* OF THEM. *NOW. NOW. NOW!*

MR. RAMIREZ? WHAT ARE YOU DOING.

I'M SORRY, SANAMI.

BUT YOU'RE NOT TELLING ANYONE ANYTHING.

FBI

FBI

FBI

WHAT THE HELL...

I THOUGHT THIS WAS SOME KIND OF TRAP, I LET THE LOCAL F.B.I. OFFICE KNOW WHERE I WAS HEADED. I KNEW SOME OF THE PARENTS HAD BEEN GETTING UNHINGED.

I THOUGHT THEY MIGHT ATTACK ME.

FBI

FBI

FBI

BUT THIS IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THAT. THIS IS TOO BIG FOR A HANDFUL OF PARENTS AND A KID TO FIGURE OUT.

FBI

FBI

HOW DID *YOU* RAISE MARIA?! WHAT IS THIS CHICKENS--

FBI

FBI

TOK

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS THING?!

HSSSS!

DON'T LET IT GET AWAY!! WE NEED IT TO PROVE WHAT'S HAPPENING!!

KAREN...

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT AS STUPID AS I AM.

THIS IS SUICIDE.

I KNOW.

NO, I THINK YOU ARE DOING THE THING WHERE YOU ACCEPT THE HYPERBOLIC STATEMENT TO MEAN A LESSER VERSION OF THE SAME IDEA.

I MEAN THAT THIS IS LITERALLY THE BEST WAY TO KILL YOURSELF ON THIS WORLD.

YOU TWO NEED TO *SHUT UP.*

WHAT DID YOU BRING FOR US...

FOUND 'DIS LOT DEAD UP OVER THE RIDGE...NICE 'N FRESH. WEAPONS. MEAT.

KNOW THE WARBUGS IS GETTING HUNGERED, AIN'T THEY?

WAIT... THIS ISN'T...

FWEEF!

NEW LONDONERS! IT'S THE NEW LONDONERS!!

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

THIS WORLD IS DYING. THE BLACK CITY HAS AWAKENED. THE MOST DANGEROUS FIGHT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR SPECIES IS ABOUT TO BEGIN.

TELL TAISHO THAT KAREN JACOBS IS HERE.

TELL HIM SHE'S READY TO PLAY HIS GAME.

CHAPTER

THIRTY

MAGNIFICENT, ISN'T IT?

IT'S A MASTERY OF LAND I'VE NEVER CONTEMPLATED BEFORE NOW. THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE IN A FEW ACRES OF THIS CITY THAN THERE ARE ON THIS ENTIRE WORLD.

I THOUGHT I UNDERSTOOD THE NUMBERS, BUT SEEING IT IS SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY. WHAT OUR KIND'S INNOVATION CAN BRING ABOUT WHEN WIELDED JUST RIGHT.

MOUNTAINS OF MEN, MOUNTAINS OF DREAMS, CLASHING AGAINST EACH OTHER IN A SEA OF TECHNOLOGY.

IT WOULD BE BEAUTIFUL TO SEE WITH OUR OWN EYES, WOULDN'T IT?

SIR.

I BEG YOUR PARDON, I DIDN'T REALIZE...

SAY WHAT YOU'VE COME TO SAY.

THE JACOBS GIRL, FROM BAY POINT.

SHE'S HERE.

BRING HER TO MY QUARTERS.

SHE'S NOT ALONE... THERE ARE TWO--

IT DOESN'T MATTER. WE'VE BEEN PREPARING FOR THIS.

...

SIR... WHO WERE YOU TALKING TO IN THERE? YOU'VE BEEN LOCKED IN ALONE FOR DAYS...

ALONE?

SIR...

COME HERE, CHILD.

DO I LOOK ALONE TO YOU?

OH...

OH MY...

GCUK

I AM GOING TO MY QUARTERS. HAVE THE JACOBS GIRL BROUGHT TO ME.

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

N-NO, SIR.

SOMETHING FEELS WRONG HERE. LIKE, PERVASIVELY WRONG. YOU FEEL IT, DON'T YOU?

OF COURSE I DO.

THERE SHOULD BE MORE OF THEM. A LOT MORE OF THEM. IT'S LIKE THIS PLACE WAS ABANDONED...LOOK AT THIS DUST, IT'S COVERING EVERYTHING...

YOU DON'T THINK THERE'S A SNEAK ATTACK HAPPENING BACK IN NEW LONDON?

NO. THAT'D BE TOO EASY.

AND FRANKLY, THEY'D LOSE. THEY'VE TRIED STORMING THE GATES BEFORE. THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT. SOMETHING STRANGER.

I STILL THINK I SHOULD GET A MESSAGE BACK TO MY FATHER...

IF I WHISTLE NOW, ROCSTAR WILL GO FOR THEM, NEW LONDON WILL DESCEND ON THIS PLACE IN HOURS.

THEN WE LOSE MORE OF THEM, AND MORE OF US.

THAT DEFEATS THE WHOLE DAMN POINT OF THIS TRIP.

THE SECOND THINGS GO SOUTH I'M DOING IT, WHETHER YOU WANT IT OR NOT. I'M NOT GOING TO JUST LET YOU DIE ON THIS FOOL'S ERRAND.

SO I'M THE FOOL, NOW?

MAYBE YOU TWO SHOULD SHUT UP AND PAY ATTENTION TO WHERE WE ARE.

I DON'T NEED REMINDING WHERE WE ARE, BEN. THESE PEOPLE HAVE KILLED SO MANY OF MY--

IF YOU THINK ANY OF THAT STILL MATTERS THEN YOU *DO* NEED REMINDING. YOU AGREED TO COME WITH US. SO SHUT THE HELL UP.

JUST THE GIRL.

ABSOLUTELY NOT. WE GO TOGETHER OR NOT AT ALL.

HE SAID JUST THE GIRL.

KAREN...

IT'S FINE.

IT'S FINE.

IF THERE'S TROUBLE, GIVE A WHISTLE, OKAY?

OKAY.

WHAT??

Y'ALL GOT ISSUES.

TAISHO?

TAISHO, I KNOW YOU'RE IN HERE...COME OUT AND TALK TO ME.

I'M HERE. ALONE.

COME ON OUT AND...

CALDER?

LOOK, I'M SORRY.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY.

NO, I DO. I SHOULDN'T HAVE STEPPED ON YOU LIKE THAT. I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, I REALLY DO. THERE ARE PEOPLE BACK ON EARTH THAT I CAN'T IMAGINE GOING TO FOR HELP.

I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT SUBJECTIVE MORALITY. I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HOW SOMETIMES YOU NEED THE DEVIL ON YOUR SIDE. I UNDERSTAND THE IDEA OF WHAT KAREN'S DOING. I UNDERSTAND WHY SHE THINKS IT'S A GOOD IDEA...

RIGHT NOW I'M MORE PREOCCUPIED WITH MAKING SURE THAT NONE OF US DIE.

DESPITE WHAT KAREN THINKS, ***THAT*** IS THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME OF THIS CONVERSATION. THAT'S WHY NEW LONDON STOOD FIRM AGAINST US COMING HERE.

THAT'S WHY, FRANKLY, EVEN IF WE ***DO*** SURVIVE THIS, WE ALL MIGHT BE HANGED FOR DISOBEYING THE COURT AND COMING OURSELVES.

YOUR MOM ISN'T GOING TO HAVE US HANGED.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE KIND OF HATRED THERE IS TOWARDS THESE PEOPLE, BEN. HOW MANY OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS, REAL PEOPLE I REMEMBER FROM MY CHILDHOOD, WERE KILLED.

SO YEAH, KAREN'S ASSERTION THAT THERE ISN'T SOME KIND OF SNEAK ATTACK HITTING THE CITY RIGHT NOW? IT DOESN'T DO MUCH TO CALM ME.

I MEAN, LOOK AT THIS PLACE. IT'S FILTHY...

IT'S...

NO...

BEN, COVER YOUR MOUTH, WE'VE BEEN BREATHING IT IN ALL THIS TIME...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

IT'S *GAZER ROOT!* THIS WHOLE THING IS A TRAP!

AW HELL.

WE NEED TO GET THROUGH THESE DOORS ***NOW.***

SANDER... WE'VE GOT A BIGGER PROBLEM.

WHAT?

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S JUST THE GAZER ROOT...

BUT DO YOU SEE THAT?

YOU'RE... YOU CAN'T BE REAL...

YOU NEED TO FOCUS, KAREN.

WHAT COMES NEXT IS GOING TO HURT.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

CALDER?

CALDER!

THIS IS WHY YOU'LL FAIL. THIS IS WHAT I HAVE TRIED TO TEACH YOU FROM THE DAY WE FIRST MET.

HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO SAVE THE LIVING IF YOU STILL WEEP FOR THE DEAD?

TAISHO.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, CHILD.

WAS THE PATH I LAID FOR YOU TO FOLLOW TOO SUBTLE? COULD YOU NOT FIND THE WAY?

I...I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

I KNOW.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED AND...

AND WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER.

WORK TOGETHER...

WHAT WAS IT SHE SAID?

KAREN, I *WON'T* HEAR THIS SUGGESTION AGAIN. THEY ARE ANIMALS. WE WILL NOT WORK WITH THEM. WE *CANNOT.*

IF YOU ATTEMPT THIS, YOU WON'T BE WELCOME IN THIS CITY AGAIN.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

HOW COULD YOU SEE THAT...AM I DREAMING?

THAT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR.

YOU'RE PLAYING BY SUCH SIMPLE RULES...YOU'LL NEVER WIN LIKE THAT.

HAVE TO...WIN...

THEN ARE YOU READY TO LEARN THE TRUE RULES OF THIS WORLD?

ARE YOU READY TO PLAY WITH ME?

YES, DAMMIT, YES.

THEN YOU KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE. THIS ISN'T ABOUT US...

THIS IS ABOUT *THEM.*

FBI
GET YOUR HANDS OFF OF ME! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS INSANITY.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DO THIS. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO I AM? I AM GOING TO SUE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.
SURE, SURE.
DON'T YOU TALK DOWN TO ME!
I AM A DAMN CELEBRITY.
YEAH, WELL I'VE NEVER HEARD OF YOU.
SLAM!
FB

HE'S GOT THOSE WILDERNESS SPECIALS ON DISCOVERY. LIVES IN THE WILD WHERE IT SHOULD BE REALLY TOUGH TO LIVE WITH NO SUPPLIES OR ANYTHING.

DUDE, I KNOW. SHUT UP. IT WAS JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS YOU SAY.

FBI

ALL THAT CRAP'S FAKE, ANYWAY. THEY HAVE HEATING BLANKETS AND CAMPER TRAILERS RIGHT OFF-CAMERA.

A CREW OF LIKE, 20 PEOPLE. DOUBT IT WAS ANY TOUGHER TO LIVE IN THAN THAT MANSION OVER THERE.

FBI

FBI

KAREN...

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY, SANAMI...IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY...

I WOULDN'T BE TOO SURE ABOUT THAT, MARCIA...

I THINK THINGS ARE GOING TO GET A HELL OF A LOT WORSE BEFORE THEY GET ANY BETTER.

LOOK, WALTER, I NEED THIS.

YOU'RE THE ONLY DEMOCRAT ON THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE WHO KNOWS ME WELL ENOUGH TO TAKE MY CALL. I KNOW YOU'RE FRIENDLY WITH THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE FBI, AND I NEED THAT CONTACT NOW.

DAMMIT, I ***KNOW*** I'M NOT A SENATOR ANYMORE, BUT THIS IS BIGGER THAN WHATEVER YOU THINK THIS IS, LIKE ***NATIONAL SECURITY*** BIG. ***INTERNATIONAL SECURITY,*** EVEN.

SIR, WE HAVEN'T FOUND ANYTHING OUT HERE...

WALTER, HOLD ON.

IT'S A BRIGHT PURPLE MONKEY! I'M NOT ASKING FOR FREAKING STRING THEORY HERE!

ALL DUE RESPECT, SIR, IT'S RAINING, AND WE'RE IN A FOREST.

EVEN IF YOUR "PURPLE MONKEY" DID EXIST...

FINE. ***FINE.***

FBI

FBI

FBI

JUST GET THE OTHERS BACK TO THE MILWAUKEE OFFICE. I'LL LOOK FOR THE DAMN THING MYSELF.

WALTER. SORRY ABOUT THAT...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT MONKEYS. JUST A...JUST A CODE-WORD.

NOW, ABOUT THAT NUMBER.

HEY THERE...

IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY. I KNOW YOU'RE FRIGHTENED AND LOST ON A STRANGE WORLD...

BUT I CAN SHOW THE WAY. AFTER ALL...

THIS IS *HOME.*

CHAPTER

THIRTY-ONE

I REMEMBER THERE WAS THIS FLASH OF WHITE LIGHT...THE WHOLE SCHOOL SHOOK LIKE THERE HAD BEEN SOME KIND OF EARTHQUAKE, OR A BOMB HAD GONE OFF...

I THINK THERE WAS SCREAMING. BUT THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LATER.

AS QUICKLY AS THE LIGHT CAME, IT WENT. IT HAD BEEN MID-AFTERNOON JUST A SECOND AGO, BUT NOW IT WAS THIS KIND OF EERIE DARKNESS.

THE KIND OF DARK YOU GET UNDER A FULL MOON. WHERE YOU CAN SEE ALL THE SHADOWS.

I DON'T REMEMBER MOVING THROUGH THE HALLS. WE WERE ALL JUST TRYING TO GET OUTSIDE.

AND IT WAS LIKE WALKING INTO A KIND OF DREAM... THE GRASS WAS THIS DARK PURPLE. THIS STRANGE, UNNATURAL SHADE.

AND THEN I SAW THEM...

THE WOODS.

THESE MASSIVE TREES OUT OF A STORYBOOK, DENSE AND KNOTTED AND STRANGE, SURROUNDING THE SCHOOL FROM EVERY ANGLE.

THERE'S SOMETHING SCARY ABOUT THE WOODS. SOMETHING PRIMAL AND WILD AND UNKNOWABLE. I'VE FELT IT SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, AND I THINK WE ALL FEEL IT.

IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH YOU KNOW ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING, IN THE WOODS, YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER ANIMAL. JUST ANOTHER SMALL PIECE IN A LARGER PUZZLE SO BIG AND SO COMPLICATED THAT YOU JUST WANT TO COLLAPSE IN THE FACE OF IT.

IN THE FACE OF THE WOODS, YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THAT YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

AND THESE TREES STRETCHED EVERYWHERE, IN EVERY DIRECTION. THESE PURPLE, HORRIBLE, ALIEN TREES. I GOT SO LOST IN THEM FOR A MOMENT, I DIDN'T NOTICE THAT EVERYONE AROUND ME WAS LOOKING UP...

WHAT DID YOU SEE, SANAMI?

IT WAS INDESCRIBABLE...

A RED GAS GIANT... THIS MASSIVE PLANET, RIGHT ABOVE US.

I'VE NEVER FELT MORE LOST THAN I DID IN THAT MOMENT. I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER FEEL ANYTHING LIKE THAT AGAIN.

SEE? SEE, THERE? ON HER SHOULDER?

THAT'S THE LITTLE MONSTER. THE LITTLE PURPLE MONKEY WITH THE SPIDER-ARMS.

FBI

MR. SENATOR...

NO. NO, DAMMIT.

I KNOW THAT TONE. THAT'S THE "YOU'RE CRAZY" TONE.

I AM NOT CRAZY.

SIR.

NO. LISTEN. THAT IS SANAMI OTA. SHE HAS BEEN MISSING, PRESUMED DEAD, FOR TWO YEARS.

AND SHE CAME BACK WITH A DAMN ALIEN MONSTER!

SENATOR RAMIREZ. WE'RE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE, BUT WE NEED YOU TO WORK WITH US A BIT. BE PATIENT. IF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS TRUE, NOTHING LIKE IT HAS EVER HAPPENED IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PLANET.

WHAT MY PARTNER IS TRYING TO SAY IS THAT YOU NEED TO SIT DOWN. DRINK YOUR TEA. TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS, AND WE'LL BE BACK TO ASK SOME MORE QUESTIONS SOON.

YOU KNOW, I NEVER THOUGHT IN MY LIFE I WOULD EVER SAY THIS.

BUT I WISH TO GOD THERE WAS SUCH A THING AS THE X-FILES.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE HEAD OR TAILS OF ANY OF IT.

LABS ARE STILL RUNNING FORENSICS ON THE GIRL'S CLOTHES...AND THEY CAN'T DETERMINE WHAT THEY'RE MADE OF. LIKE, THE FABRIC ISN'T ANYTHING THEY HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED BEFORE.

YOU DON'T THINK...?

ALL I THINK IS THAT WE NEED TO KEEP THIS LOCKED DOWN UNTIL SOMEBODY FROM WASHINGTON TELLS US OTHERWISE.

THESE DAYS? WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT'LL TAKE.

MAYBE THAT'S FOR THE BEST.

MAYBE SOME THINGS ARE BEST KEPT QUIET.

INTERROGATION ROOM

SO, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TALK TO ME.

I DON'T SEE WHAT THERE IS TO TALK ABOUT, DAD.

DON'T GET ANGRY AT *ME*, SANAMI. I'M NOT THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED REACHING OUT TO SENATOR RAMIREZ. I DIDN'T GET US INTO THIS MESS.

YOU DID.

OH, SO YOU'RE *ANGRY* WITH *ME?*

THIS IS JUST TYPICAL.

SO DAMN TYPICAL.

WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

YOU *ARE* ANGRY AT ME. YOU'RE ANGRY AT ME FOR RUINING YOUR BIG BREAK!

I'M GUESSING THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS HAVEN'T BEEN TOO HOT, HAVE THEY? ARE YOUR SHOWS EVEN IN SYNDICATION ANYMORE? I'M GUESSING THEY PROBABLY AREN'T.

AND NOW, IT'S ***MY FAULT*** FOR TAKING AWAY YOUR CHANCE AT SOME KIND OF REAL FAME. BEING THE MAN WHO PROVED THAT THERE ***ARE*** ALIENS OUT THERE. I BET YOU'D HAVE MADE A PRETTY PENNY ON THOSE TAPES.

THAT'S NOT...

I SPENT A ***DAY*** WALKING YOU THROUGH EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, DAD. EVERY HORRIBLE, MONSTROUS THING.

STORIES OF ME NEARLY ***DYING.*** STORIES OF MY FRIENDS IMPALED BY LITERAL MONSTERS IN A WAR ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE. STORIES THAT ENDED WITH ME THINKING THAT I HAD ACTUALLY BEEN ***KILLED.***

BUT EVERY TIME I STARTED TO CRY, I SAW YOUR EYES LIGHT UP. I SAW ***GREED,*** DAD. I SAW YOU WATCHING THE VALUE OF THESE TAPES GO UP AND UP AND UP.

I'M YOUR DAUGHTER, FOR GOD'S SAKE! YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ME IN ***TWO YEARS!*** YOU THOUGHT I WAS ***DEAD!***

HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO ACT? IS THERE SOME GUIDEBOOK? PLEASE. GIVE ME THE GUIDEBOOK. TELL ME HOW I AM SUPPOSED TO ACT IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO CARE!

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO CARE.

HAVE YOU EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT THE WEIRD COSMIC COINCIDENCE OF YOU BEING IN THE *EXACT* PLACE I LANDED, YEARS AFTER THE FACT? THAT THE UNIVERSE ACTUALLY BROUGHT US TOGETHER?

I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN MORE SYMPATHY FROM AN ACTUAL STRANGER.

...

SANAMI, I...

rattle rattle

WAIT... WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

click

MREH.

DR. ROBOT?

HOW THE HECK DID YOU GET IN HERE?

MREH

HE WANTS US TO FOLLOW HIM, I THINK?

IS THIS...NORMAL BEHAVIOR?

NO... THIS ISN'T LIKE HIM AT ALL.

WAIT...

YOU'RE GOING TO LISTEN TO A LITTLE MONKEY?

HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'S MANAGED TO BREAK ONE OF THE LOCKS, SO YEAH. I AM.

MREH.

COME ON.

WHAT'S IN HERE...?

SANAMI!

SANAMI, ARE YOU OKAY? HAVE THEY BEEN TREATING YOU ALRIGHT?

YEAH, I'M FINE. I'M FINE.

I'M SO GLAD.

OKAY, WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?

WELL, SO FAR DR. ROBOT'S THE ONE TO ASK.

HOW DID HE GET IN HERE?

I DON'T KNOW.

THAT'S SO STRANGE. JUST LAST NIGHT HE WAS RECOILING AT EVERY LOUD NOISE HE HEARD. HOW COULD HE MAKE HIS WAY OVER 60 MILES TO THE MILWAUKEE FBI OFFICE?

THAT'S UNUSUAL, RIGHT?

MREH.

LOOK, THAT JUST SEEMS LIKE MORE OF A REASON TO SEE WHERE HE WANTS TO GO.

NO.

I HAVE A BETTER PLAN THAN THAT.

WE NEED TO GET THE TAPES BACK. THE FOOTAGE OF SANAMI.

THE LOCAL NEWS STATION IS A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM HERE. THEY HAVE AN UPLINK TO CNN. I CAN CALL MY CONTACTS AND GET IT IN THEIR HANDS.

THAT WAY, EVEN IF THEY LOCK US BACK UP, THE INFORMATION IS OUT THERE.

THAT'LL MEAN YOU WON'T MAKE A DIME ON ANY OF IT.

I KNOW.

SO WHAT DO YOU SAY, ERR...ROBOT? CAN YOU FIND THE TAPES?

ENOUGH! I'VE HAD ENOUGH!

REALLY? THE PLAN IS TO LISTEN TO AN ALIEN MONKEY?!

THIS IS TOO MUCH. THIS IS ALL TOO MUCH. I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE MYSELF A FUGITIVE FROM THE FBI.

THIS IS ALL SOME BIZARRE DREAM. I NEED TO WAKE UP. I NEED TO WAKE UP. I NEED TO...

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

HELLO, MOTHER.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?

I'M NOT SEEING THINGS RIGHT...I CAN'T BE...

SANAMI... SANAMI IS DEAD...

AND... MY MOM...THIS DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

JUST KEEP MOVING!

THE TRUTH IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU...

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS GRASP IT...

NONE OF THIS IS REAL.

NO, KAREN. IT IS *ALL* REAL.

REACH OUT. FEEL IT.

STAB!

SLASH!

MOM...

KRAK!

GDUP!

IT'S...IT'S A SWORD.

THAT'S RIGHT, KAREN. IT IS A SWORD.

YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

KRIK!

RUMBLE!

FWOOSH!

THIS...THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING.

sk!

SPAK

NOW IS THE TIME TO USE IT.

NOW IS WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGES.

CHAPTER

THIRTY-TWO

ALRIGHT, KAREBEAR...

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

STEADY YOURSELF, AND BREATHE...

YOU'VE GOT THIS.

I DON'T...

IT'S OKAY.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PULL THE TRIGGER.

DAD, I...

PULL THE TRIGGER, KAREN.

I DON'T... I DON'T...

IT'S NOT TIME.

YES, IT IS. YOU'RE JUST DOING THAT THING YOU ALWAYS DO.

YOU'RE WORRIED YOU'RE GOING TO GET IT WRONG.

I'M NOT GOING TO SCREW IT UP.

THEN YOU SHOULDN'T BE NERVOUS. YOU CAN DO THIS.

WE CAN DO THIS.

YOU FEAR THE STRIKE. YOU'VE ALWAYS FEARED THE STRIKE.

YOU SEE THE WEIGHT, DON'T YOU? THE FACT THAT MAKING A CHOICE TO ACT CHANGES A PERSON FOREVER. THAT ONCE YOU MAKE A MOVE, YOU CAN NEVER UNDO WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

DAMMIT, I KNOW THAT...

HOW DID IT FEEL TO KILL THE BOY? ADRIAN, I THINK IT WAS? HE WAS OUT OF CONTROL. HE WAS GOING TO GET YOU ALL KILLED.

YOU DIDN'T PAUSE THEN.

I DID THE RIGHT THING.

I'M DONE FEELING GUILT OVER WHAT I DID.

YOU MISUNDERSTAND.

YOU'RE STILL VIEWING THE WORLD AS A CHILD. YOU NEED TO *GROW UP*, KAREN.

THERE IS NO RIGHT. THERE IS NO WRONG. THERE ARE MERELY *DECISIONS*. FAILURE IS INEVITABLE. IT IS FAR MORE LIKELY THAN SUCCESS...

BUT IN THE FACE OF THAT, YOU NEED TO ACT. YOU NEED TO DECIDE. TO CHANGE.

YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THAT YOU DO NOT CONTROL YOUR LIFE, YOU DO NOT CONTROL WHAT WILL BE PERCEIVED AS RIGHT OR WRONG, YOU CAN ONLY CONTROL YOURSELF.

YOU CAN ONLY *STRIKE--*

KRUM!

SEIZE THEM!

BOOM!

CHEATER.

CHEATER.

TELL ME THIS IS JUST THE ROOT...

TELL ME THIS ISN'T REAL.

I THINK...IT'S REAL...

ISAAC. CAN YOU HEAR ME?

RUMBLE

IS THE GROUND SHAKING?

OH GOD...WHAT'S HAPPENING?

I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT HAPPEN...AND SO I'VE PREPARED.

HAVE YOU?

MY GRANDFATHER CAME TO THIS WORLD IN 1943. IT WAS NEARLY THIRTY YEARS AFTER THIS CRUEL WORLD SHOULD HAVE TAKEN ITS POUND OF FLESH.

THE GREEN MONKS HAD FOUND A WAY TO MANIPULATE THE ENERGIES OF THIS WORLD, AND ONE OF THEM HAD GONE FAR ENOUGH TO ALTER ITS PLAN.

THEY WANTED WEAPONS. THEY WANTED A WAY TO FIGHT BACK.

THEY FOUND THE IMPERIAL NAVY OF JAPAN. WITH ITS BOMBERS AND ITS GUNS.

AND THEY USED THEM TO ***SLAUGHTER*** TWO ENTIRE CITIES! HALF OF THE POPULATION OF THE WORLD TORN APART.

YOU ARE LOST IN THE WEEDS, GIRL!

I'M SAYING THAT A WARRIOR CASTE OF MONKS WERE ABLE TO OUTSMART THIS PLANET ALMOST ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

I'M SAYING THAT THIS WORLD ***CAN*** BE BEATEN.

ISAAC?

ISAAC ISN'T HOME RIGHT NOW.

ISAAC...

I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE. I KNOW YOU HAVE TO BE IN THERE.

ISAAC?

BEN, YOU NEED TO STAND BACK...

NO!

ISAAC. LISTEN TO ME.

DO YOU KNOW WHEN I FIRST FELL FOR YOU? DO YOU REMEMBER? I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE, BUT DO YOU REMEMBER IT NOW?

YOU WERE SITTING ON THE TOP OF THE STAIRS BY THE HENKE ENTRANCE TO THE SCHOOL. YOU WERE CURLED UP IN A LITTLE BALL, CRYING INTO YOUR KNEES.

I SAT DOWN NEXT TO YOU, AND YOU JUST BURST INTO TEARS. AND YOU LET IT *ALL* OUT. YOU TOLD ME THAT ADRIAN WOULD NEVER LOVE YOU LIKE YOU WANTED HIM TO.

AND YOU HELD ONTO ME, CRYING, FOR A HALF HOUR. I NEVER SAID A WORD, I WAS TOO AFRAID TO, BUT YOU JUST KEPT SOBBING INTO MY SHOULDER.

I HAD NEVER MET SOMEONE SO UNAFRAID TO LET THEIR EMOTIONS OUT, NO MATTER HOW MESSY AND UNFORMED.

I HAD NEVER MET SOMEONE AS HUMAN AS YOU.

BOOM

THAT...

THAT'S MY FATHER'S HORN.

OH GOD. ROCSTAR BROUGHT THEM HERE.

SO, THIS IS WHERE THE HORDE HAS BEEN HIDING ALL THESE YEARS...

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

MY SON IS IN THERE, NIGEL...

I'LL BURN IT ALL TO THE GROUND IF I HAVE TO.

ARMIES OF NEW LONDON! ADVANCE!!

WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?!

STOP BEING CRYPTIC AND JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY.

THERE IT IS. THERE'S THE ANGER. THE FEROCITY...

THAT'S WHY I CHOSE YOU.

I CAME HERE TO ASK YOU FOR HELP, AND YOU'VE DRUGGED ME AND ARE TRYING TO KILL ME!

I AM HELPING YOU, GIRL.

STOP IT!

JUST STOP.

=GCLIK=

B-BEN?

YES, ISAAC. IT'S ME.

AND YOU'RE STRONGER THAN THIS THING. I *KNOW* YOU ARE.

I... I DON'T THINK...

NO.

THIS IS THE END OF THE CONVERSATION.

THE LINK HAS BEEN SEVERED. I HAVE SERVED MY PURPOSE.

...

GOODBYE, BEN...

WE NEED TO RUN.

TAKE MY SWORD...

THEY FOLLOW STRENGTH. MY ARMY IS TWELVE MILES DUE NORTH.

WHAT?!

I'VE DONE SO MANY TERRIBLE THINGS. I...I MISUNDERSTOOD WHAT THIS WORLD WANTED FROM ME.

I KNOW THAT I COULD NEVER BE THE ONE THAT BROUGHT OUR PEOPLE TOGETHER... BUT IT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

THEY ARE WAITING FOR YOU TO LEAD THEM.

SAVE US, KAREN JACOBS.

SAVE US FROM THIS HELL. AND GIVE US BACK OUR FUTURES.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

CRASH!

KAREN!

WE NEED TO GO NOW!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN. WE JUST NEED TO *RUN!*

EVERYONE, GET TO THE TREE LINE!

WHAT...

NOW!!

OH... OH GOD, HELP US ALL...

Vomp

COVER
GALLERY

ISSUE TWENTY-NINE COVER **MICHAEL DIALYNAS**

ISSUE THIRTY COVER **MICHAEL DIALYNAS**

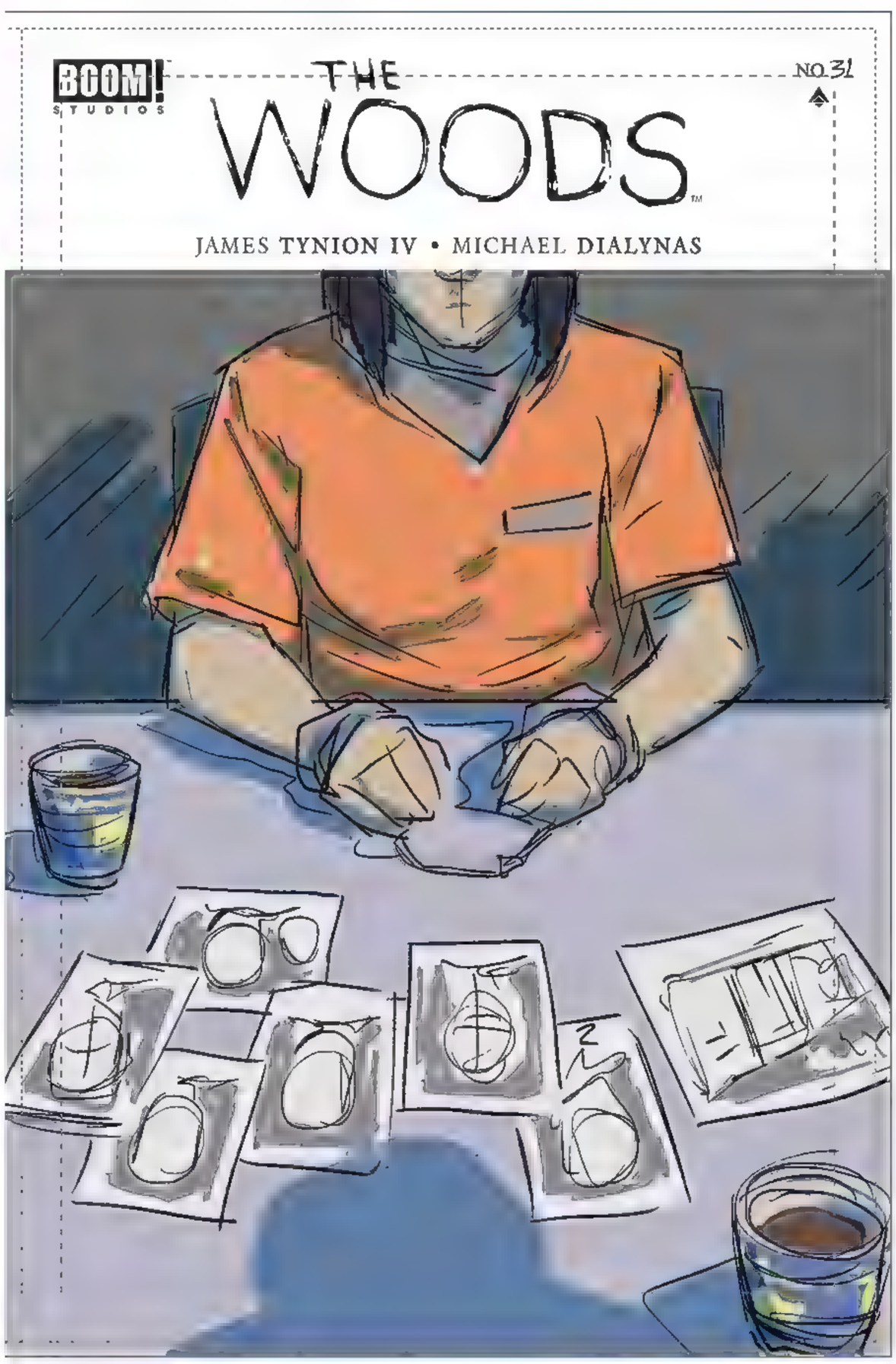
ISSUE THIRTY-ONE COVER **MICHAEL DIALYNAS**

ISSUE THIRTY-TWO COVER **MICHAEL DIALYNAS**

MICHAEL DIALYNAS

SKETCHBOOK

The original concept for the Issue #31 cover was to feature Ben, but ultimately the creative team decided instead to spotlight Sanami's personal struggles on Earth for this arc's penultimate cover.



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THE WOODS™

NO. 31

JAMES TYNION IV • MICHAEL DIALYNAS

BOOM! STUDIOS

THE WOODS™

NO. 30

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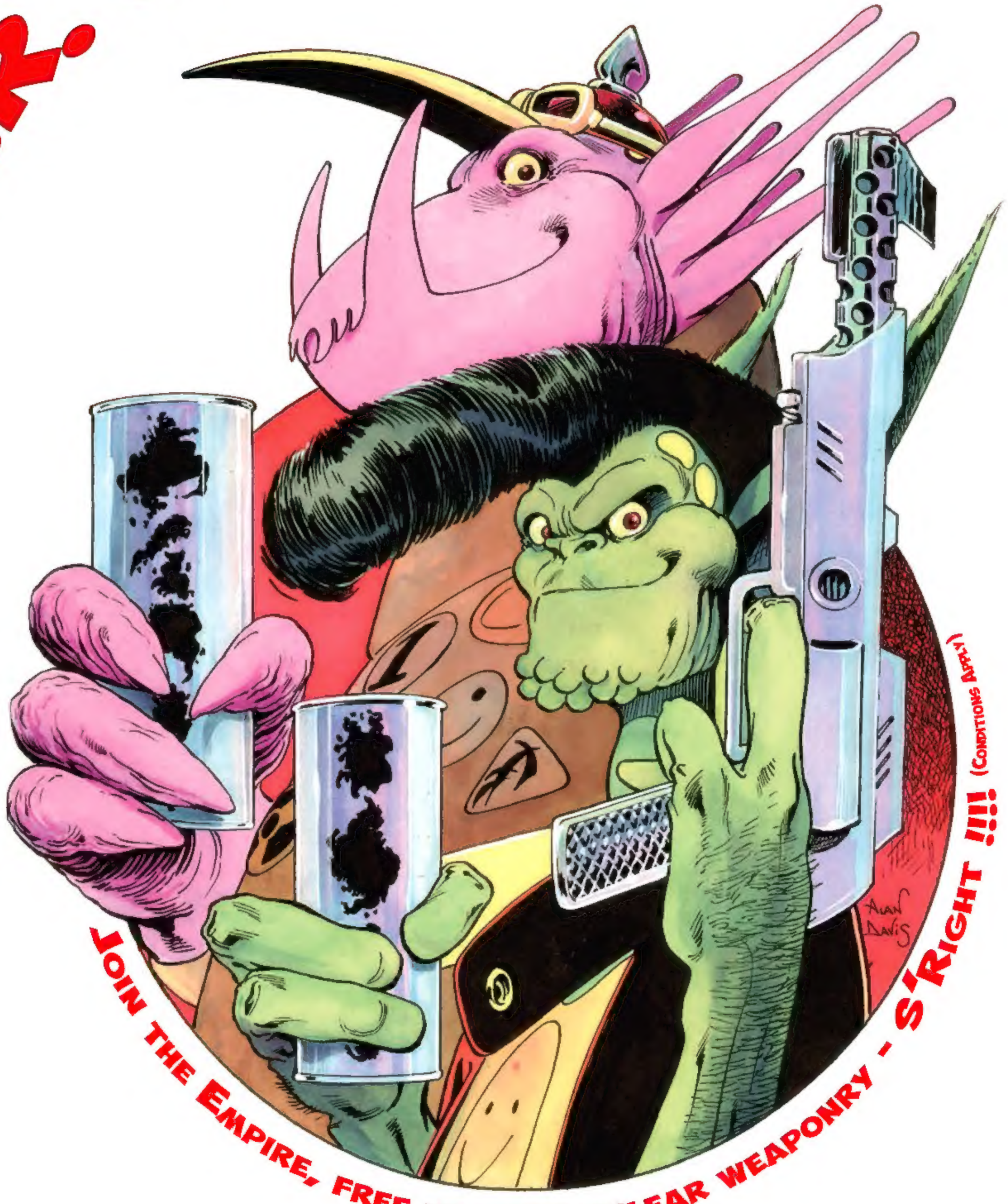
Every hundred years, the Black City has selected a remote population from Earth and transported them to the woods. These civilizations have not always lived in harmony...but now, they must either fight in unison to turn their weapons against the technology that brought them here in the first place, or meet total elimination in the face of Isaac's unworldly power. Will this unification of factions be enough or are they all doomed?

Written by **James Tynion IV** *(Detective Comics, Memetic)* and illustrated by **Michael Dialynas** *(Gotham Academy, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles)*, **"The Final War"** collects the critically acclaimed eighth arc of the best-selling series.

"There's all kinds of beauty and terror lurking in this forest, and its visual appeal engages the imagination. The feeling of chaos is this comic's greatest strength; a world this unpredictable is worth getting lost in."

—Multiversity Comics

D.R. & QUINCH



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K6 NW